

Random Encounters
The Itinerant Bazaar

By Stan!



The Rules of Business

The Itinerant Bazaar can appear in any town anywhere on the Material Plane. Its vendors always have exotic goods from across the globe for sale, but they never sell anything that a local vendor has in his or her stall. What's more, the merchants in the bazaar must adhere to the following rules when choosing their wares for a specific day's sales.



1. Never sell any item that is produced or created less than five hundred miles away from the current location.
2. Never sell an item or material that is banned by local law or tradition.
3. Never sell prepared food (although fresh and dried ingredients are permissible).
4. Never sell livestock or other nonsentient creatures.
5. Slave trade is permissible if local laws do not forbid it.

At the beginning of each week, the proprietors invite some of their merchant partners to join them on one or more of the bazaar's visits. (They are very particular about which merchants they invite where.) Each merchant receives a list containing the local customs, restrictions, and laws of the sites they will be visiting. It is up to the merchants to ensure that their wares fall within the specifications. If they fail, no member of the Itinerant Bazaar does anything to aid the merchants in dealing with the local authorities. Furthermore, any merchant caught knowingly violating the prohibitions is summarily banned from the bazaar for a period of no fewer than one hundred years.

What's in the Bazaar?

The question still remains: What is one likely to find when the Itinerant Bazaar comes to town? The answer is just about anything under the sun. The number of vendors and particular mixture of wares that are in the bazaar changes from day to day. The proprietors make sure to bring enough stalls to generate excitement, but not so many that they overwhelm the local merchants. They consider their good reputation to be just as valuable as any merchandise they could bring. Likewise, they try to match the wares available to the tastes and needs of the town they will be visiting.

Still, one can find a few stalls everywhere the Itinerant Bazaar travels.

Fashions by Tonne

The bazaar always features a stall of finely tailored clothing, exotic fabrics sold by the yard, and leatherwear that is both amazingly durable and uncommonly comfortable. The stall is run by an elegant half-elf tailor named Luvi Tonne, who also happens to be one of the bazaar's proprietors. His outfits are renowned for being fashionable and practical -- well suited for both hiking through the wilderness and making appearances in the noble courts. Tonne has both ordinary clothing and select pieces that have been enhanced to provide protection or to exhibit some other magical effect. Unlike most of the merchants in the bazaar, Luvi Tonne's wares are not offered at a discount. In fact, he adds 25% to the price of his garments, but he is willing to negotiate (never selling for lower than the price listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Outfitter's Paradise

Another stall that is present everywhere the Itinerant Bazaar stops is known as Outfitter's Paradise, which consists of an impossible jumble of hanging rods laden with animal pelts, display racks overflowing with all manner for strange devices, and shelves of air-tight storage bottles filled with an incredible array of powders, dried meats, poultices, and several unidentifiable substances. Outfitter's Paradise is run by the bazaar's other proprietor, a gnome named Nana Júichi. Nana is very outgoing, and she seems to enjoy talking with her customers even more than making sales. She claims to have "everything you'll ever need when you visit the wilder places of the world." This includes odd devices such as a collapsible canteen, a vial of "instant campfire," and a map of the constellations that folds down small enough to fit in one's pocket. Perhaps the most unusual, and popular, is a folding knife that, when the proper activation word is spoken, can turn into a fork, toothpick, hand mirror, quill, or lockpicking tool. Everything in the stall is priced 10-30% lower than the usual market price. However, the greater the discount, the more likely the item is to break or malfunction in some way. (This is a fantastic place for the DM to introduce unusual or

unique items he or she wishes to add to the campaign.)

Stale Wind

The only other stall that can be found everywhere the bazaar travels takes its name from a dwarf proverb that says, "Even a stale wind can pipe a merry tune." The business is run by a gray-bearded, taciturn, old dwarf named Rumpol Hamhand, and it is not much to look at. The wagon itself looks like a worn and badly used woodcutter's cart that has been half filled with branches, sticks, and twigs. There is no sign of any pack animal to pull the cart, so one can only imagine that the dwarf does so himself. Throughout the Market Day, Rumpol sits on a stool next to the cart using a large hunter's knife to whittle away at one twig after another. If anyone asks what he is working on, Rumpol puts down his current project and opens his coat to reveal that the inside is lined with finely crafted wooden flutes and whistles. Each one is capable of making a perfect imitation of one particular forest animal. He has flutes for each bird and rodent as well as ones for wolves, foxes, bears, owlbeasts, and more.

In fact, Rumpol can carve a flute or whistle for any animal, magical beast, or vermin. Rumpol arrives at the Market Day carrying 2d4+3 instruments (the DM may determine what creatures they mimic). He is willing to take special requests and can carve one flute or two whistles per day. Rumpol charges between 55 and 100 gp (5d10+50) for each flute; the price depends solely on his mood and how much he likes a particular customer.

Anyone playing one of Rumpol's instruments gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Handle Animal checks for that specific type of creature (and may, at the DM's discretion, gain a +1 circumstance bonus for checks made for similar creatures). Bards may apply this bonus to their *fascinate* class ability when using it against the specified creature only.

Bringing the Parts Together

Given the rules applied to the bazaar, perhaps the PCs are called on to deal with a merchant who, for whatever reason, doesn't quite follow the rules. Part of their dealings may include talking to the proprietors, though they're quick to follow their own rules, of course. Another option may be that the PCs require a specific component for some reason (maybe a nearby sage needs it in return for services rendered), and their search leads them among the merchants of the bazaar!

Coming in Part 4 of the Itinerant Bazaar

Take a look at some more vendors!

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